

# Common Hawkweed

*Hieracium lachenalii*

Sunflower Family

## Class B Noxious Weed: Control Required

### Identification Tips

- Herbaceous perennial that grows up to 3 feet tall
- Stems are upright, hairy, leafy and topped by 4-12 small yellow flower heads in an open, round-topped cluster
- Flower heads have white hairs around the base
- Stems have a milky sap
- Leaf edges strongly toothed, leaf bases tapered and narrowing
- Leaves at base of stems are grey-green in color, broadly elliptical or lance-shaped, and still present when plants are flowering



Common hawkweed grows in disturbed soils such as roadsides, fields and pastures.



This weed quickly goes from flowers to seeds.



Common hawkweed starts as a rosette, from which multiple branches/flowers will form.

### Impacts

- Invades pastures, rangeland and grasslands, reducing forage value of these lands for grazing
- Displaces native plants due its aggressive growth

### Distribution

- Most widespread of all the hawkweed varieties known to occur in King County
- Like other hawkweeds, it does well in disturbed soils and can quickly invade roadsides, forest openings, meadows, fields and pastures
- Prefers full sun but can tolerate some shade

### Questions?

King County Noxious Weed Control  
Program Line: **206-477-WEED**  
[www.kingcounty.gov/weeds](http://www.kingcounty.gov/weeds)

## What You Can Do

The King County Noxious Weed Control Program is actively trying to control the spread of common hawkweed. Do your part by removing this weed from your property and washing vehicles, boots and animals that have been in infested areas. If you find it growing on public lands, please report the location to our 24-hour program information line at 206-477-WEED or online at [www.kingcounty.gov/weeds](http://www.kingcounty.gov/weeds)

## Control Methods

The preferred method of control is one that incorporates a multifaceted and adaptive approach. Control methods need to be applied over several years to be successful.

**Prevention:** Early detection and removal is the best way to control hawkweeds. Clean equipment, especially mowers, after using in infested areas.

**Manual:** Small infestations can be removed by thorough digging with a small shovel or trowel; however, sometimes soil disturbance encourages the growth of new plants. Dig up plants in the spring or early summer when the soil is still moist and before the seeds mature. This variety of hawkweed reproduces through seed production only. It does not reproduce vegetatively via stolons or rhizomes so cutting and pulling are effective if done with frequency and diligence. If the plant is in flower, cut off the flower head, bag and dispose of it into the regular trash. Hawkweeds can form viable seeds after they are cut or dug up. **Mowing is not recommended. Mowed plants respond by quickly flowering again.**

**Mechanical:** Regular tillage will help control hawkweeds on agricultural lands.

**Chemical:** Follow labels exactly as written and only use products appropriate and legal for the site. Glyphosate (such as Roundup) is effective but is a non-selective herbicide that will also kill grasses in the area being sprayed. When using a non-selective herbicide, you must re-seed with desirable vegetation. Bare areas will re-infest from existing seed bank and any missed hawkweed plants. Triclopyr (such as Brush B Gone) is a selective herbicide that targets only broadleaf plants so it may be used in grassy areas. Treatment is most effective in the spring, early summer, and fall. Apply the herbicide to entire leaf and stem surface of actively growing plants. Additional products may be available for controlling hawkweeds on pastures, landscapes, roadsides and other non-crop sites. For more information, please contact the King County Noxious Weed Control Program.



*Common hawkweed reproduces by seed only; control plants before they go to seed. Small infestations can be controlled by hand pulling.*